

# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR NORTHWEST WISCONSIN COUNTIES

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State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development

## An end to seasonal jobs pushes unemployment up

The unemployment in November for the ten-county region of Northwest Wisconsin climbed to 5.2 percent from 3.9 percent in October. The unemployment rate rose as workers were laid off, mostly from seasonal jobs, and the number of unemployed in the region increased.

An increase in the unemployment rate in November is very typical in the northwest. But even with the increase the current rate is still less than the rate of one year ago of 5.3 percent and the number of residents unemployed in the area is down slightly.

The regional unemployment rate remains lower than the national unemployment rate in November of 5.7 percent, not seasonally adjusted (the national seasonally adjusted rate was 6.0 percent). The state seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in November climbed to 5.1 percent, up two-tenths of a percentage point from October. Both state and national unemployment rates were higher this November than one year earlier.

Every county in the northwest region reported a rise in unemployment rate in November, as did 71 of the state's 72 counties. The two largest increases in the state, however, occurred in Bayfield and Iron counties. In Bayfield County the unemployment rate increased from 3.7 percent in October to 6.8 percent in November, while in Iron County the rate increased from 5.2 to 8.6 percent. The early cold weather brought a quick end to tourism and construction projects.

Construction employment declined in every county in the region in November adding to a loss of 220 jobs. Similar job reduction occurred in retail trade as tourism declined and restaurants, novelty shops and gas stations cut back on workers.

The greatest reduction in workers occurred in the services industries. Here the loss included not only seasonal workers from resorts and amusements but also workers in business services. Regionwide over 700 workers with

service industry employers lost their jobs. The impact was greatest in Ashland, Douglas and Sawyer counties.

Because of these job reductions the unemployment rate in Ashland County increased from 5.5 percent in October to 6.9 percent in November; in Douglas County the rate increased from 3.6 to 4.2 percent, and in Sawyer County it increased from 3.4 to 5.1 percent. In Ashland County, Advanced Data-Comm has since announced that it will reopen the call center that was closed at the end of September.

Price County, with an increase of four-tenths of a percentage point in unemployment rate, had one of the smallest increases in the region. The unemployment rate rose from 3.8 percent in October to 4.2 percent in November. Many of the region's wreath making jobs are in Price County and these jobs help sustain the local economy as other seasonal reduction occur.

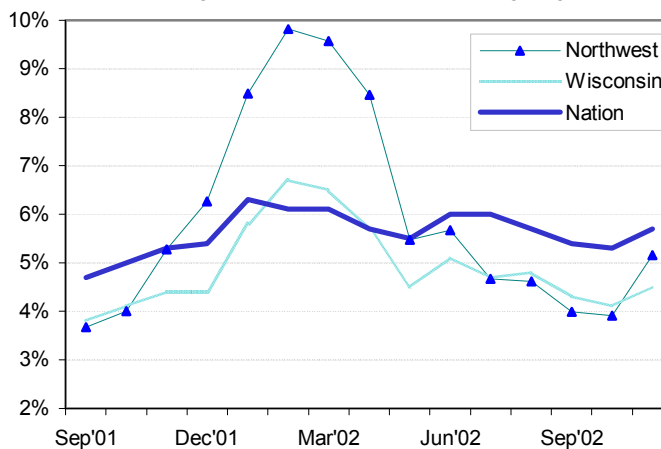
While it is difficult to determine the exact number of jobs in wreath and garland production, a good estimate would be between 4-500 in just Price County. In the ten-county region the number of wreath making jobs tops 700 in November, the peak of production. In addition to the jobs with employers the region supports many more self-employed wreath makers who work out of garages and out-buildings.

Even though unemployment increased in nearly every county in the state, 29 reported a lower rate than in November 2001, including Burnett, Taylor

and Douglas counties. In Burnett and Taylor counties there were fewer claims for unemployment compensation benefits in mid-November this year compared with the same week one year ago. The unemployment rate in Burnett County in November was 4.4 percent, down from 5.4 percent one year earlier. In Taylor County the unemployment rate was 4.1 percent compared with 4.8 percent in November 2001.

The increase in the number of residents filing claims for

Unemployment Rates-Not seasonally adjusted



	Sep'01	Oct'01	Nov'01	Sep'02	Oct'02	Nov'02
Northwest	3.7%	4.0%	5.3%	4.0%	3.9%	5.2%
Wisconsin	3.8%	4.1%	4.4%	4.3%	4.1%	4.5%
Nation	4.7%	5.0%	5.3%	5.4%	5.3%	5.7%

unemployment benefits in Rusk and Washburn counties pushed unemployment up a full percentage point. In Rusk County the unemployment rate in November was 5.6 percent up from 4.4 percent in October, while in Washburn County the rate also increased to 5.6 percent from 4.2 percent.

There were 2,604 residents in Northwest Wisconsin who filed a claim for unemployment benefits in mid-

November compared with 2,256 in the same week in 2001. The current number includes the many area residents who are receiving benefits under the Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) law that expires December 28, 2002. Although legislation to renew the law is pending it will not be voted on until January.

<b>November 2002 Estimates</b>											
<b>Not seasonally adjusted</b>											
	Wisconsin	Ashland	Bayfield	Burnett	Douglas	Iron	Price	Rusk	Sawyer	Taylor	Washburn
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	3,053,900	8,040	7,690	7,120	23,230	3,520	6,980	7,180	10,440	10,970	8,140
Employed	2,915,100	7,490	7,170	6,810	22,250	3,220	6,690	6,780	9,910	10,510	7,680
Unemployed	138,800	550	530	310	980	300	300	400	530	460	460
Unemployment rate(%)	4.5%	6.9%	6.8%	4.4%	4.2%	8.6%	4.2%	5.6%	5.1%	4.1%	5.6%
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	2,867,540	8,760	4,020	4,820	19,590	2,460	6,630	6,110	7,430	9,370	6,170
Construction & Mining	130,760	360	270	280	1,130	330	240	220	410	410	320
Manufacturing	567,300	1,690	200	1,050	1,190	510	2,770	2,280	840	3,280	1,150
Transportation & Pbl.Util.	131,750	220	250	150	2,750	60	130	220	190	570	240
Wholesale Trade	135,660	170	30	30	1,210	60	120	140	130	490	170
Retail Trade	519,310	1,570	700	980	4,020	570	1,030	770	1,840	1,480	1,320
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	153,940	360	140	150	500	40	220	130	310	380	210
Services	795,150	2,380	830	750	5,350	480	1,150	910	1,790	1,650	1,320
Government	433,680	2,010	1,610	1,440	3,440	400	990	1,450	1,920	1,120	1,430
<b>Change from previous month</b>											
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	200	-100	50	-10	340	80	-20	-80	-150	-100	30
Employed	-12,400	-200	-200	-30	200	-40	-50	-160	-330	-220	-90
Unemployed	12,600	110	250	30	150	120	30	80	180	120	120
Unemployment rate(%)	0.4%	1.4%	3.1%	0.4%	0.6%	3.4%	0.4%	1.2%	1.7%	1.1%	1.4%
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	470	-140	-180	10	-150	-30	10	-40	-240	-40	-80
Construction & Mining	-3,490	-20	-10	-10	-40	-40	0	-10	-20	-50	-10
Manufacturing	-3,060	-10	0	30	-10	0	40	-30	0	10	10
Transportation & Pbl.Util.	-880	0	-20	0	60	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wholesale Trade	170	10	0	0	-30	0	-10	0	0	0	0
Retail Trade	8,740	-50	-110	-20	30	-10	-10	0	-60	20	-20
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	100	0	0	-10	-10	10	0	0	0	0	0
Services	-7,600	-90	-100	-20	-210	-10	-40	-30	-170	-10	-50
Government	6,480	20	70	30	60	20	10	20	10	-10	0
<b>Change from one year ago</b>											
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	59,600	220	250	-190	240	-50	120	210	570	580	100
Employed	53,900	200	190	-110	340	-70	110	160	540	620	70
Unemployed	5,700	10	60	-80	-100	20	10	50	40	-40	30
Unemployment rate(%)	0.1%	0.0%	0.5%	-1.0%	-0.5%	0.8%	0.1%	0.6%	0.1%	-0.7%	0.3%
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	24,250	40	130	-10	730	-90	10	0	490	380	-40
Construction & Mining	2,990	0	20	20	90	10	20	20	30	20	30
Manufacturing	-8,840	-70	0	20	-80	20	40	-40	-20	160	-40
Transportation & Pbl.Util.	-1,630	-60	10	0	210	0	-10	0	0	30	-20
Wholesale Trade	-1,720	-10	-10	0	40	0	-10	10	0	20	10
Retail Trade	3,010	-20	30	30	120	10	0	0	240	0	10
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	3,220	10	-10	20	0	0	0	0	10	10	0
Services	20,430	-130	-40	-120	240	-20	-20	10	240	70	20
Government	6,790	310	140	20	100	-100	-20	0	-10	60	-40

\* Includes participants residing in area. \*\* Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers.

**Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: [WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI](http://WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI)**

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